

# Arts in the Parks

## Cecil M. Harden Lake (Raccoon SRA ) & Historic Mansfield Roller Mill Property Profile

**Website:** <http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/2959.htm>

### Key Messages/Stories:

- Native forest and large rock outcrops line the upper part of Big Raccoon Creek. Cecil M. Harden Lake resulted from the damming of the creek for flood control in 1960. The lake also provides recreation, wildlife management and economic benefits. A variety of fish, flora and fauna can be viewed at the property.
- Nearby Historic Mansfield Roller Mill is a preserved, working example of industrialization in Indiana at the turn of the 20th century. This 1880s flour mill uses machinery from that time period to show visitors how flour and cornmeal were processed from wheat and corn. It is an almost complete and unchanged example of flour mills from this period.
- The Native Americans gave the name of “Pun-go-so-co-nee” to the largest stream in Parke County, meaning “Stream of Many Sugar Trees.” Early settlers translated that as Sugar Creek and followed the Native Americans in collecting sugar water from the trees each spring. They boiled the water down to syrup or granulated sugar for use as a sweetener during the rest of the year. Today, several active sugar camps still operate in the hard maple groves along Sugar Creek. Equipment has been modernized, but the technique and spirit is the same as that of the pioneers more than 150 years ago.
- Residents treasure a unique link to the past as the “Covered Bridge Capital of America.” A total of 37 covered bridges dot the countryside of Parke County, which is more than any other county in the United States. An annual festival is held in mid-October to coincide with the fall color change and to view the covered bridges. Vendors display local arts and crafts. County-wide visitation during this ten-day affair exceeds more than one million visitors.

### Top Five Things to Do:

- Boating on Cecil M. Harden Lake
- Fishing at one of the many access areas around the property
- Hunting during season in the RM units on the Southern side of the lake
- Attending one of the many interpretive and recreational programs on the peninsula
- Hike along our trails and possibly see some of the natural sandstone cliffs off Trail 4

**Lodging:** Electric, non-electric, primitive and youth tent area camping available.

**General visitor profile:** campers (weekends or weeklong); day-users for picnics and hiking;; scout and other groups for volunteer service; Youth groups in the youth tent area; Boaters coming in for the lake, Folks coming in to fish and hunt and folks coming in to take part in interpretive programs and weddings.



**Potential arts venues:**

- 1 small amphitheater next to Chapel Shelter. Has a gazebo
- Various shelter houses:
  - North, Hickory, Harden, South, Hilltop, Raccoon, Locust, Chapel, Payne, Bluebird, occupancy 40-50, electricity in all but Payne and Bluebird, pit toilets available at all but Chapel, which has flush toilets. North and South are partially enclosed, Chapel has an enclosed railing around the entirety.
- Mansfield Roller Mill (only during festivals)

**Visitation in FY2014:** 1.2 Million Visitors at Raccoon SRA,  
Mansfield Roller Mill 12,793 folks (Parke County Covered Bridge Festival)

**Nearby Communities:** Rockville, Brazil, Greencastle, Clinton, Crawfordsville, Cayuga, Terre Haute

Please email questions to [Artsintheparks@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:Artsintheparks@dnr.IN.gov).

